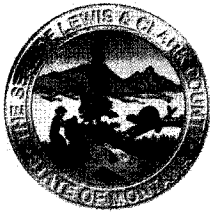


EXHIBIT

DATE

Feb 8, 2011
316

Lewis & Clark C O U N T Y



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Andy Hunthausen**Michael A. Murray****Derek Brown**

City County Building 316 North Park

Helena, Montana 59623 406.447.8304 Fax: 406.447.8370

To Whom It May Concern:

The Lewis and Clark County Commission is opposed to HB316. Montana counties and cities are struggling with the economic recession in much the same way as the State of Montana is. While we have always closely evaluated our appropriations to ensure they matched our revenue constraints, the current economic conditions have required us all to re-evaluate our funding decisions. As a County, we have seen very little growth in revenues, and with revenue sources tied to growth in our jurisdictions, we have been forced to adjust accordingly. Much like the State of Montana, we have not seen a decrease in the demand for services and are faced with the requirement of maintaining the services provided with fewer resources.

HB316 proposes to further reduce revenue sources that local governments depend on to provide essential services. We oppose legislation that takes money from local governments to make up for deficits at the State level. While we understand the Legislature needs to evaluate historic and proposed appropriations, simply carving out 10% of historic distributions to Counties and school districts to be deposited in the State general fund does not adequately address the problem.

Lewis and Clark County urges the legislature to recognize that decreases in funding sources such as those proposed in HB316 will negatively impact general services provided by the local government. Please remember that we serve the same constituents and are facing the same fiscal constraints. Balancing your budget on the backs of local government does not serve the people of Montana well.

We ask you to consider the negative impact this will have on all Montana local governments and vote no on HB316.

Sincerely,

Derek Brown - Chairman

Andy Hunthausen - Commissioner

Michael A. Murray - Commissioner